

Maha govt seeks CMFRI support to start cage fish farming

The Maharashtra government has sought technical support of the CMFRI for starting large-scale cage fish farming ventures, a major attempt by the state for development of its integrated fisheries and aquaculture sectors.

Minister of State for Finance, Planning and Home (Rural) of Maharashtra, Deepak Kesarkar, who visited the CMFRI headquarters here yesterday, requested the authorities to provide technical guidance to the state to launch 500-cage fish farming units in the brackishwater resources of the Sindhudurg district. Sindhudurg, a coastal district in Maharashtra, has rich brackishwater resources.

The minister said that the Maharashtra government would provide financial support to the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) to help the state implement a suitable cage farming model to the ecological and geographical conditions of the brackishwater resources in the Sindhudurg district. "The cage farming models being implemented by the CMFRI in Pizhala in Ernakulam district and in various parts of Manglore are highly successful.

The Maharashtra government is much eager to emulate such models in Sindhudurg district too as a better livelihood option for the coastal people," Kesarkar is quoted as saying in a CMFRI release here today.

Joint Managing Director of Maharashtra Small Scale Industries Corporation, Leena Bansod who accompanied the minister to CMFRI, visited the cage farming sites in Pizhala, an island village in Ernakulam district. She interacted with the farmers in the sites and invited them to Maharashtra to share their experiences with the farmers there so as to encourage them to take up cage fish farming enterprises. As per the decision taken in the meeting between Maharashtra minister with the CMFRI authorities, a team from the Mariculture Division of CMFRI will visit Sindhudurg district to assess the ecological condition and carrying capacity of the water bodies prior to the launch of cage fish farming.

"The CMFRI team will also select ideal spots and suitable species for the farming.

The CMFRI will soon submit a detailed project proposal to the Maharashtra government after reviewing environmental and geographical aspects of the region," the release said. In addition to the cage fish farming, the Maharashtra minister also wanted the CMFRI to provide technical support to set up backyard hatchery units of cobia and silver pompano in the district to boost the farming ventures. He further requested the institute to help formulating fishing regulation for Maharashtra and provide technical support to oyster and mussel farming.

Kesarkar also sought CMFRI's guidance to establish small scale units for the depuration of oyster and mussel, besides setting up seed production units of the bivalve.

Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Maharashtra, N Vasudevan also accompanied the minister.